

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2727

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 03063

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, LE, IS

SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON - LEBANESE ARMY MOVE TO SOUTH

REF: JONES/LEVITSKY TELECONS, JULY 31

1. CONFIRMING REF TELECONS, UN USGY URQUHART INFORMS US MESSAGE FROM ERSKINE RECEIVED NY ABOUT 1600 HOURS JULY 31 CONTAINS MUCH OF SAME INFO REPORTED FROM JERUSALEM, INCLUDING FACT FIRING HAS STOPPED. LAF REPORTED TO BE DEPLOYED WITH NEPALESE CONTINGENT.

2. ERS-INE REPORTS RECEIPT OF RELIABLE INFO THAT ISRAELIS DURING PAST 48 HOURS HAVE URGED HADDAD TO RESIST LAF MOVE SOUTH, CLAIMING THAT SYRIAN TROOPS WOULD ACCOMPANY LAF AND LARGE PROPORTION OF LAF UNIT ARE PRO-SYRIAN. HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SAID TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN IDF AND HADDAD SUNDAY, JULY 30, DURING WHICH THIS POSITION EXPOUNDED.

3. URQUHART SAID UN IN FIELD HAS BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL
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DURING PAST FEW HOURS IN EFFORTS TO CONTACT IDF LIAISON OFFICERS LEVINSON AND BEN-GAL. SYG IS NOW TRYING TO REACH ISRAELI CHARGE IN NY TO CONVEY HIS CONCERN OVER SITUATION AND SEEK ISRAELI SUPPORT FOR EFFORTS TO ENABLE LAF UNIT TO CONTINUE TO DESTINATION IN TIBNIN AREA WITHOUT FURTHER DIFFICULTY.

4. WHILE CONSCIOUS OF GOL SHORTCOMINGS IN PREPARING THIS MOVE, URQUHART EXPRESSED VIEW IT WOULD NOW BE DISASTROUS IF LAF HAD TO WITHDRAW OR IF MAJOR BATTLE ERUPTED. ALTHOUGH AWARE THAT WE HAD BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH GOI, URQUHART RE-EMPHASIZED UN'S D-SIRE THAT WE DO WHATEVER WE CAN, IN PARTICULAR WITH ISRAELIS, TO HELP RESOLVE SITUATION. MISOFF AGAIN ASSURED HIM WE WERE IN VIRTUALLY CONSTANT TOUCH WITH ISRAELIS IN TEL AVIV AND THAT MOST RECENT WORD MISSION HAD WAS THAT AMB LEWIS WAS MEETING WITH WEIZMAN.

5. AS ALSO REPORTED BY PHONE, LEBANESE CHARGE TADMOURY TELEPHONED MISSION ABOUT NOON FOLLOWING TELEPHONE CALL TO HIM FROM AMB TUENI IN BEIRUT. HE ASKED THAT USG "INTERVENE TO END FIGHTING BETWEEN LAF AND ISRAELIS". MISOFF ADVISED HIM THAT REQUEST WOULD BE PASSED TO DEPT BUT THAT US WAS ALREADY IN TOUCH WITH ISRAELIS, UN AND GOL ON THIS QUESTION. MISOFF ALSO EXPRESSED GREAT DOUBT THAT ISRAELIS WERE FIRING ON LAF, IN LIGHT OF FIRM ASSURANCES GOI HAD GIVEN THAT IT WOULD NOT FIRE ON THIS UNIT. TADMOURY ALSO CALLED UN (GUYER) WITH SAME MESSAGE. AT THAT TIME UN DECIDED NOT TO CONTACT ISRAELIS SINCE IT ALSO CONSIDERED IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT IDF INVOLVED IN FIRING AND WISHED TO AWAIT REPLY TO ITS REQUEST TO FIELD FOR CURRENT INFO. YOUNG

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